

Laszlo Zsolnai
Business Ethics Center
Corvinus University of Budapest

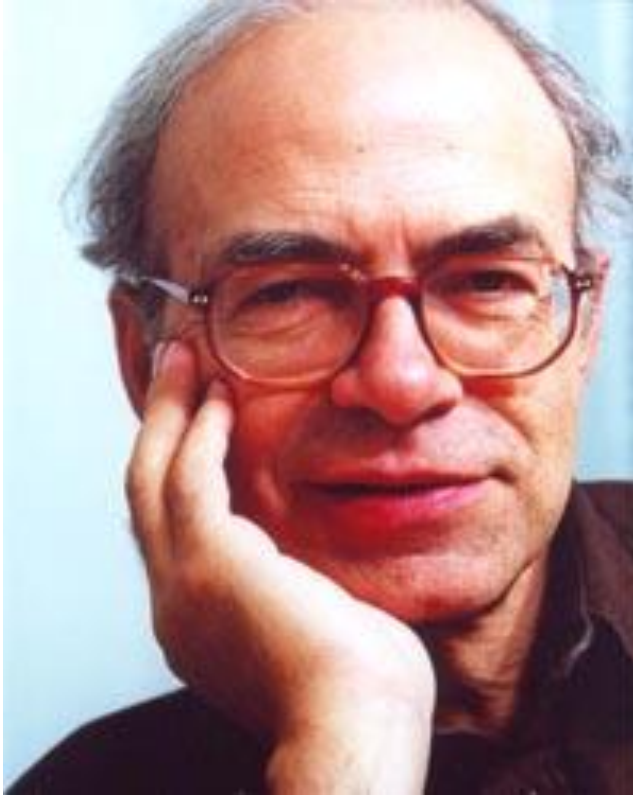
Environmental Ethics

San Servolo, Venice
2010 July 5

Theories of environmental ethics

- (i) individual creatures \Rightarrow awareness-based ethics**
- (ii) ecosystems \Rightarrow ecosystem ethics**
- (iii) Earth as a whole \Rightarrow Gaia ethics**

Awareness-based ethics



If a **natural being suffers**, we should take his or her **suffering** into **consideration**.

Peter Singer

Princeton University

What we do with animals?

animal testing



What we do with animals?

**industrial animal
farming**



The implications of awareness-based ethics

Animals should be provided with natural life-conditions and painless existence.



Ecosystem ethics



Aldo Leopold
(1887-1948)

An act is **right** if it preserves the **integrity, stability** and **beauty** of natural ecosystems.



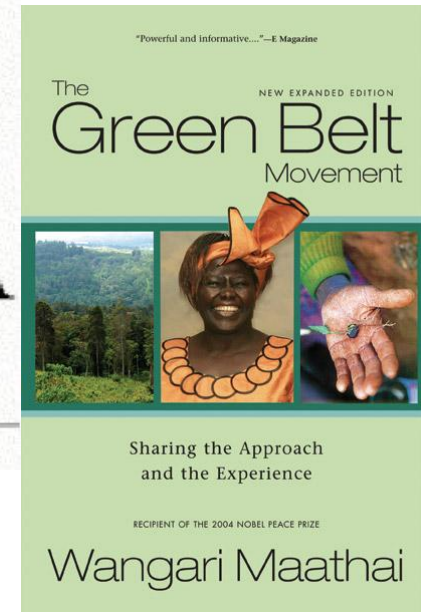
What we do with natural ecosystems?

mining
dams
building



The implications of ecosystem ethics

The original state of ecosystems should be preserved and restored.



Gaia ethics



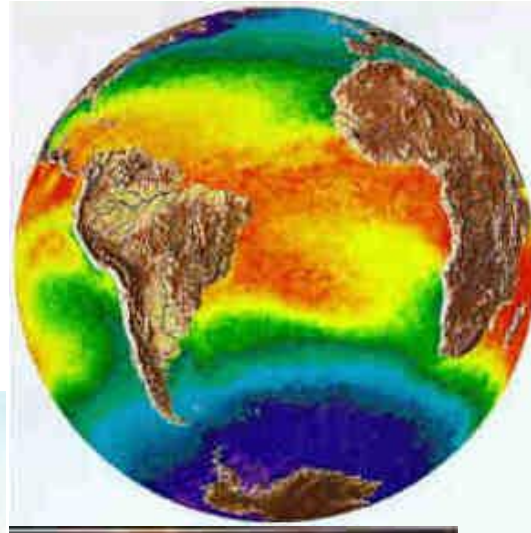
**The Earth is a
living entity.**

James Lovelock

Royal Society

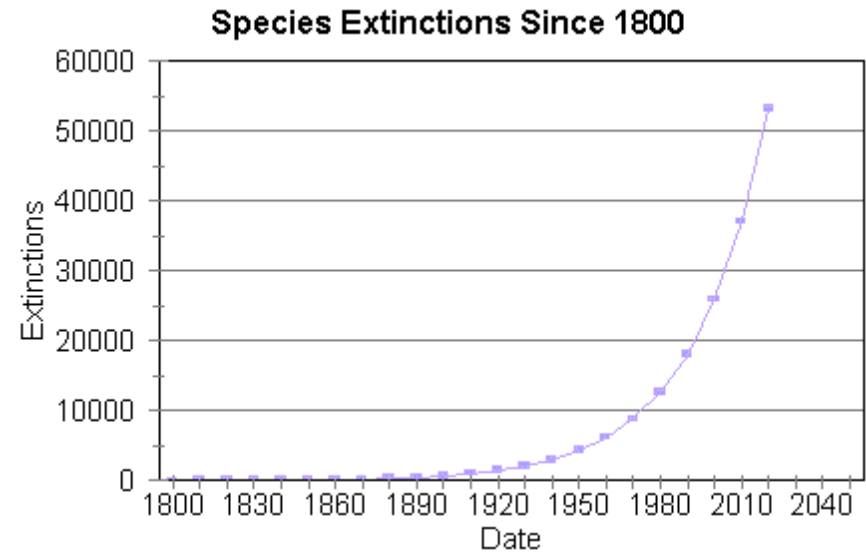
What we do with the Earth?

climate change



What we do with the Earth?

extinction of species



The implications of Gaia ethics

Society should respect the **global patterns and mechanisms of the Earth.**



Forum for the **Future**



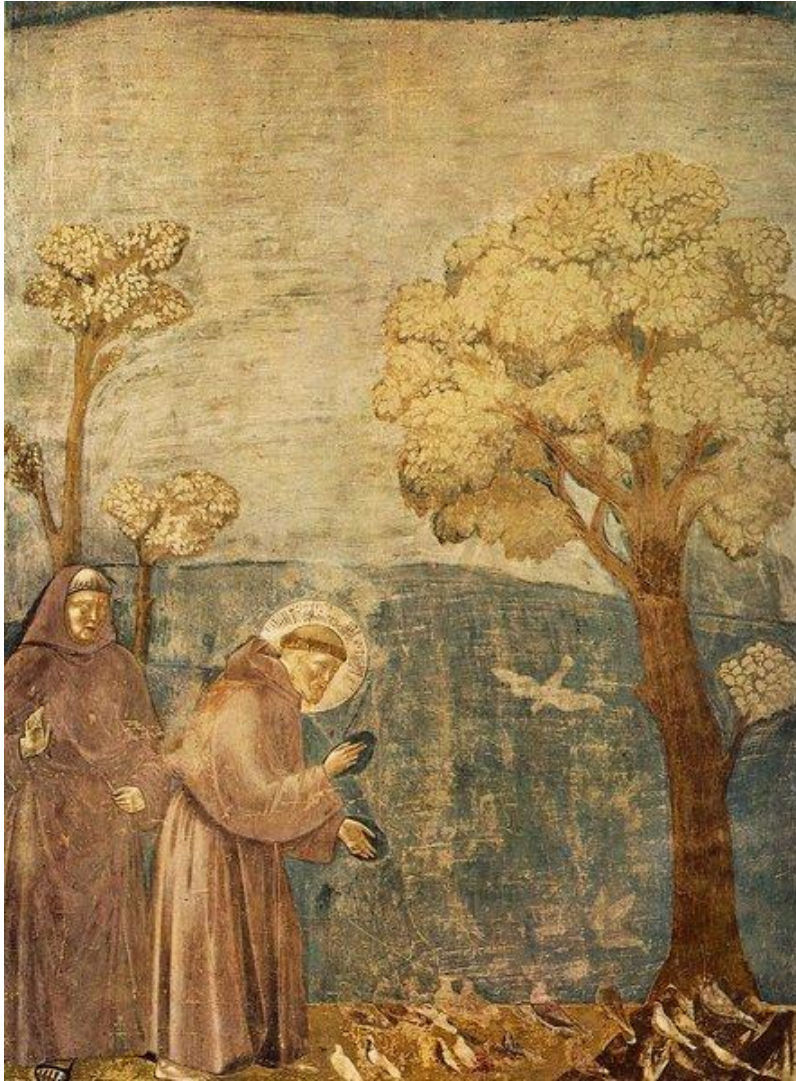
Ecological sustainability



**Non-declining
natural ealth**

$$\Delta V(E) \geq 0$$

St. Francis of Assisi



**Our Brother Sun,
Sister Moon and Stars,
Brothers Wind and Air,
Sister Water, Brother Fire,
Sister Earth, our mother,
who feeds us,
and Sister Death, from
whose embrace no mortal
can escape.**

Summary

- (1) **Animals should be provided with natural life-conditions and painless existence.**
- (2) **The original state of ecosystems should be preserved and restored.**
- (3) **Society should respect the global patterns and mechanisms of the Earth.**